



COMMUNITY REPORT

By MELISSA NAZARETH
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NOT all children spend their holidays glued to the screen or getting bored. Several young philanthropists based in Bahrain are engaging in social work this summer, shining a bright spotlight on the importance of introducing community-oriented activities at an early age.

According to reports online, humanitarian work offers multiple benefits to adolescents, like improved critical thinking, more empathy, higher self-worth and fewer depressive symptoms, among others.

New Millennium School grade 12 student Alison Reeves concurred, asserting that her experience with social work has been 'rewarding'.

The Indian Community Relief Fund's (ICRF) Thirst Quenchers summer campaign volunteer believes that participating in the initiative has been an educational journey for her.

The programme is aligned with the Labour Ministry's summer mid-day outdoor work ban, where ICRF volunteers visit locations across the kingdom every Saturday of July and August to distribute refreshments.

"I started a year ago and can say that it has helped me hone my social skills," the 17-year-old Indian expatriate told *GulfWeekly*.

"I learned how to introduce myself to different people and deal with various situations. For instance, many workers do not speak English, so we have to find a way to communicate with them. We also understand how to be polite with them," added the Juffair resident, who aspires to pursue a degree in event management while continuing with community activities.

"ICRF has shown me there are communities like this wherever I go. So, even when I study abroad, I am hopeful I can find a place where I can volunteer," she added.

Alison is inspired by her parents Althea and Basil Reeves, who are also committed to social causes and have always encouraged her to pursue the same.

Tubli resident Aamer Al

TOGETHER: It's important to introduce a sense of community at an early age



SUMMER SPENT RIGHT



PHILANTHROPIST: Alison



SMART: The Al Zaman siblings at a summer camp event

Zaman also motivated his children, Rayyan, 13, and Jenan, 11, to volunteer at a summer camp for differently abled children, conducted by Shahzaib's Club House – a community organisation dedicated to supporting individuals with diverse abilities.

"The turning point was taking them to watch the Bollywood movie *Sitaare Zameen Par* ('stars on Earth'), which focuses on the same cause," Aamer revealed.

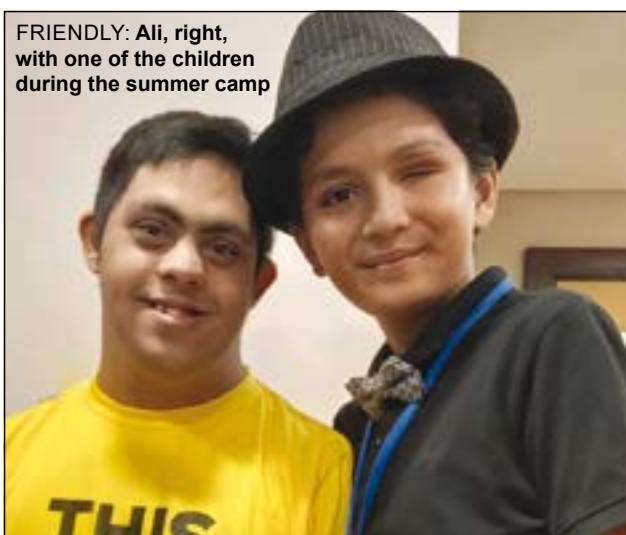
"I then spoke to them

about how we need to help these 'stars', who are just as talented as us. While they found it tough initially, we motivated them not to give up and the organisers were supportive too."

Club House founder Amena Shahruckh said that sometimes, the young volunteers were assigned tasks to do with the children and at other times, they came up with their own ideas.

"Our young volunteers also assisted our teachers in the classroom," she added.

FRIENDLY: Ali, right, with one of the children during the summer camp

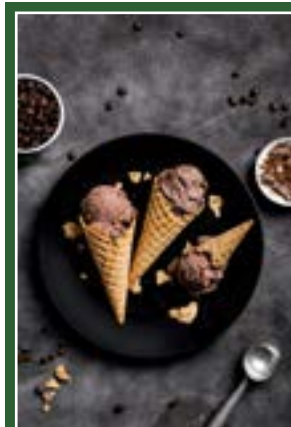


Spurred on by the enriching experience, the siblings, who attend Naseem International School, have expressed a desire to continue volunteering every summer.

Youngsters Ali Ashraf, 12, and Fatima Zaynab Al Isa, 11, also volunteer at Shahzaib's Club House's summer camp, which will continue until the end of this month. The home-schooled children from Saar are equally excited about the experience and hope to

continue it every year.

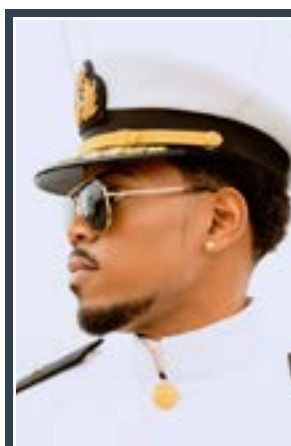
"I led an activity on recycling paper," Ali said. "It was difficult when the differently abled children cried or when I didn't understand what they were saying and I'm still learning to get better at that. But I learned how to be patient through this experience and had a really good time with all the children," the Australian-Pakistani talent added.



CHILL OUT
Unique ice creams
SEE PAGE 3



LEISURE SCENE
Food and fun
SEE PAGES 4-5



PULSE OF POP
Movies, music & more
SEE PAGE 6



WANDERLUST
Salalah beckons
SEE PAGE 7



MASTERCHEF: Nivedita

BAHRAIN-BASED author and wordsmith Nivedita Roy has released her latest book of poems, exploring diverse themes inspired by injustice, war, women's issues and more, writes Melissa Nazareth.

Bringing alive the Indian expatriate's 'scribbles', *Recipe for a Poet's Broth*, is a collection of 65 poems across seven sections, spanning introspections, fond memories and more.

Sip on a sonnet

"I made a short trip to the Swiss Alps in April this year and as I sat admiring the joys of nature, myriad thoughts came to mind. Pouring them on paper was a cathartic experience," the 54-year-old told *GulfWeekly*, explaining the creative process behind her 'labour of love'.

"Once the compilation was sorted, I shared the manuscript with my editor Ritu Bhatnagar, who is based in Bengaluru; this is our sixth project together.

"I requested Avantika Vijay Singh to write the Afterword. She is a poet and editor and has authored three books.

"Canada-based writer Kavita Ezekiel Mendonca, daughter of the famous poet Nissim Ezekiel, wrote a note for me in book as well, and I am overwhelmed with

gratitude to all," the Al Raja School teacher added.

Speaking of the book's name, the Adliya resident explained that it was sparked by a NaPoWriMo 2025 prompt – a month-long undertaking by poets around the world to pen down 30 creations in 30 days, based on a daily prompt.

Many of the poems featured in the book were written during NaPoWriMo last year and some others are older.

Nivedita, who has called Bahrain home for more than two decades, draws inspiration for a lot of her work from the kingdom.

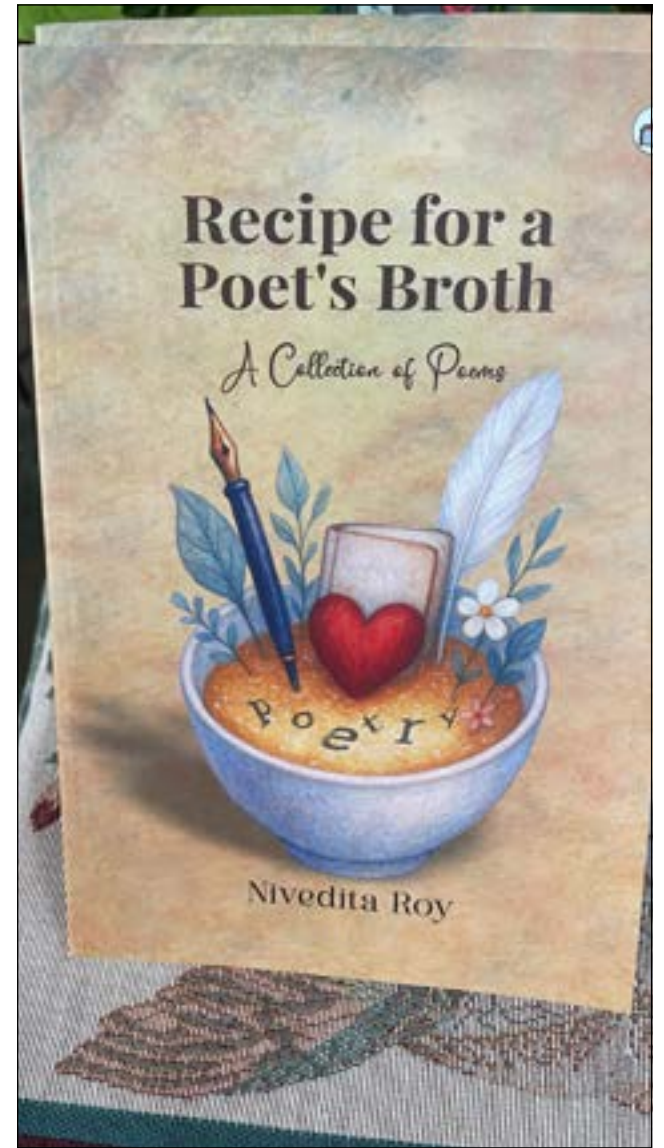
"I am so proud to be part of this beautiful island. One of the poems in the section *Poetic Forms* was written during the creative writing session of the Bahrain

Writers' Circle; *Sunset* was inspired by the mesmerising sunset at Karbabad beach; *A cache of lessons, a multitude of teachers* encapsulates my experiences as a teacher in Bahrain and *A bustling nest to an empty nest* has references to my life here after my children left," she said.

Dreams of Gaza has been translated into Arabic for an international anthology entitled *Heaven's Paradise*. An excerpt from the poem reads:

*'Dreams of a warm hearth with kin breathing
A posse to play marbles or
just a cheerful race...
The childish blabber was
drowned in chaos'*

The book is published by Authorspress India and available on Amazon.



UNVEILED: The book cover

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FRUITY WRAPS!

TO stay cool this summer, chefs across Bahrain have been infusing perennial favourites like shawarma and sandwiches with seasonal flavours, like mango and watermelon, writes Naman Arora.

Several local shawarma restaurants have come up with summer sauces for Bahrain's beloved street food – shawarma.

One eatery, Zooba, is offering up a sandwich with a summery twist – fresh watermelon.

The Watermelon Baladi sandwich pairs the fresh fruit with feta cheese and a minty pesto, all served in an Egyptian pita, taking inspiration from similar wraps that have gone viral in Egypt and Iraq.

This summer, restaurants are also infusing fresh, vibrant flavours into the classic wrap, creating a lighter yet equally satisfying version for the hotter months.

Traditional slow-cooked meats are being paired with bright, tangy accompaniments such as mango pickles,

pomegranate molasses, and citrus-infused tahini.

Some chefs are swapping out the usual garlic sauce for yoghurt-based dressings blended with mint or roasted pepper, adding a refreshing edge without overpowering the meat's rich flavours.

Antar Shawarma has brought back its popular shawarma with mango and lemon sauces.

Those who want an additional fruity kick have

more mango and lemon-inspired options on the menu to enjoy as well.

These seasonal variations appeal not only to adventurous diners but also to those seeking something lighter yet comforting during Bahrain's humid summer.

The result is a fusion of tradition and innovation, offering patrons fresh reasons to return to their favourite shawarma spots during the summer months.



FRESH: The watermelon-cheese sandwich offers a summery twist on the classic wrap

What's the scoop?

As the temperatures soar, our quest for unique chilled eats continues. This week, *GulfWeekly* lists some interesting ice creams from around the world, highlighting distinct flavours and cultural ways of devouring these irresistible cool treats.



VARIETY: Culture plays a major role in deciding ice cream flavours – from Japanese greentea to Levantine mastic

CASSATA

WHILE cassata is a popular Italian dessert, we are talking about the crescent-shaped Indian ice cream inspired by the Sicilian cake. Most popular since the 50s up to the early 90s, Cassata ice cream was the sweet ending to virtually every Indian wedding feast; especially the loaf variety that was sliced and served. The chilled dessert features ice creams like vanilla and strawberry layered with a milk-soaked sponge cake base, garnished with nuts and candied fruit 'tutti frutti'.



BASTANI SONNATI

COMBINING the delicate flavours of saffron, rose water, vanilla and pistachios, this golden scoop of goodness is a staple during celebrations in Iranian households and said to symbolise unity and joy in gatherings. Historical reports on Bastani Sonnati (traditional ice cream) trace its origins to the Achaemenid Empire dating around 500 BC. It is popularly consumed as an ice cream float with carrot juice, topped with cinnamon or other spices.



GOLDEN: Bastani Sonnati

CHILLED: Ice cream rolls have gained international popularity



I-TIM-PAD

WHILE ice cream rolls have gained global popularity only over the last decade, the concept has been around for longer. Translating to stir-fried ice cream, I-Tim-Pad is a popular street food from Thailand, made by spreading the cream or milk base onto a metal surface of sub-zero temperature and scraping it into a roll. Some versions might add nuts and other toppings. Culturally, theatrics accompany the making of I-Tim-Pad, with 'expert chopping and rolling' as part of the process.

SALMIKKIJÄÄTELÖ

SALMIKKIJÄÄTELÖ or 'salmiak ice-cream' is a popular Finnish frozen dessert sold in supermarkets and on the streets, especially during the summer. It's greyish in colour and gets its distinctive salty flavour from salmiak or salty liquorice – a widely consumed confection in Nordic countries. The main ingredient in it is ammonium chloride. Salmiakijäätelö can be enjoyed as scoops, soft serves and ice cream bars, occasionally drizzled with salmiak sauce to intensify the unique taste.

TASTE: Liquorice is a flowering plant of the bean family Fabaceae, from the root of which a sweet, aromatic flavouring is extracted



QUESO ICE CREAM PAN DE SAL

THE Philippines is known for its unique ice cream flavours like ube, corn, avocado and queso, which blends cheddar cheese with sweet cream, sometimes, with bits of cheese in it! Slightly crumbly in texture, the chilled treat has the perfect balance of salty and sweet. The scoop is traditionally devoured as an ice cream sandwich paired with a cloud-like pan de sal – a slightly sweet Filipino bread roll that is soft on the inside with a crispy crust.

BOOZA

THIS frozen dairy Levantine dessert brings interesting flavours together like mastic (resin), which has an earthy, piney taste and sahlab or orchid flour, which is light and floral, reminiscent of the bloom. Over time, it has grown in popularity in the Middle East. It has a stretchy, chewy texture, which connoisseurs might say feels like the Turkish dondurma. However, the flavour profile remains unique, lending it a distinctive personality.

STRINGY: Spaghettieis with fruity goodness. Photo: Eis Fontanella Eismanufaktur Mannheim

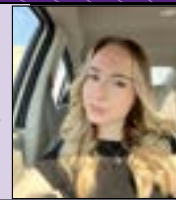


SPAGHETTIEIS

THIS whimsical German chilled treat gets its name from the stringy vanilla ice cream topped with strawberry sauce and grated white chocolate, all resembling a dish of spaghetti with tomato sauce and parmesan cheese! Ice cream shop owner Dario Fontanella is credited with the creation, inspired by his experience tasting Mont Blanc, which, like Spaghettieis, is also stringy and made using a spätzle (noodle) press. It has gained popularity outside Germany owing to its unique presentation and 'playful' nature.

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



DELICIOUS: A sumptuous meal at Plums

MENU THAT'S TOO GOOD TO RESIST!

CELEBRATE India's 79th Independence Day in style at The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain.

Relish the taste of the country's most delicious flavours at Nirvana, where a unique dining affair will transport you to the streets of the South Asian country, for BD24 per person. Guests can book the restaurant tomorrow, Friday, from noon to 3pm or 7pm to 11pm.

This summer, indulge in a three-course Soleil Select Lunch by the sea at La Plage, where a salad, main and dessert will make for the perfect weekend outing with family and friends. It costs BD18, inclusive of a soft beverage, and for an additional BD5, a selected house beverage will be available, everyday, from noon to 4pm.

Gather your friends and dive into a taco extravaganza at Cantina Kahlo. With a variety of tacos and signature beverages, there is something to excite every palate.

Choose from savoury meats, marinated

chicken, shrimp and flavourful vegetarian options, for BD25 per person, inclusive of two glasses of a beverage on Tuesday, from 7pm to 10pm.

Meanwhile, for an authentic Italian experience, choose Primavera, where a traditional affogato event will transport you to the charming cafes of Italy. The restaurant invites guests to indulge in a harmony of bold espresso and creamy gelato from Wednesday to Monday, 7pm to 10.30pm. The experience is priced a la carte.

Host your next business lunch at Primavera with a refined three-course set menu. Perfect for client meetings, or a stylish midday break, it costs BD19 on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 12.30pm to 3pm.

Visitors can experience an evening of refined elegance at Plums, where every moment is designed to bring you closer. Savour exceptional flavours in a stunning setting and let Plums create memories that will last a



lifetime. It's priced at BD69, inclusive of a soft beverage. For an additional BD25, a grape beverage pairing is available, on Sunday from 7pm to 11pm.

Step into a world of relaxation at the Ritz-Carlton

TASTE THE BEST OF ITALY AT INTERCONTINENTAL

INTERCONTINENTAL Bahrain is inviting guests for a warm and hearty Italian dining affair this weekend.

Gather your family and friends and visit Medzo, where authentic Italian delicacies await you, along with chef's weekend specials.

Perfect for groups of three to six, the offer includes unlimited pizza, pasta and salad, free ice cream for children, complimentary garlic bread basket and family-style sharing platters. It is available every Friday and Saturday, from noon to 10pm and costs BD8,900 net per adult and BD4,500 net for children under 15.

For an unforgettable evening of signature seafood dishes and refreshing ocean-inspired beverages, look no further than the Regency Tent. The facility is hosting the Seafood Night tonight, Thursday, from 6.30pm to 10.30pm and costs BD24net inclusive of soft beverages and BD32net with unlimited house beverages.

Meanwhile, an elevated brunch



VARIETY: Seafood Night



UNIQUE: Floating breakfast

experience awaits you at Legendz SteakHouse.

Dig into a la carte mains and live stations featuring barbecue, seafood, fresh cheeses and delicious beverages.

Exciting live performances will add to the atmosphere, tomorrow, Friday, from noon to 4pm. It costs BD28 with soft beverages and BD38net with unlimited selected beverages.

Start your morning right with a gorgeous floating breakfast for two in the heart of Manama. Priced at BD19 for two, it includes an array of breakfast favourites everyday, from 9am to noon.

For more information or reservations, call 36967701.

INDULGE in shareable cuisine and sip on punchy handcrafted beverages at Sheraton Bahrain Hotel's Wild Brunch this weekend.

Enjoy a range of delicious flavours, all while live entertainment electrifies the atmosphere.

Ladies can enjoy the experience for a special rate of BD23, while other guests will have to shell out BD36net per person with soft beverages and BD46net per person for a selected beverage package.

The brunch is available tomorrow, Friday, from 12.30pm to 5pm.

Join the hotel for a magnificent three-course special lunch menu featuring vibrant flavours from around the world. Available every weekday, from noon to 3pm, Wild's daily changing menu features dishes from Spain, Italy, Peru and Asia and costs BD10,500net, including homemade iced tea.

Guests can join Chef Doris and her team tonight for an extraordinary buffet featuring signature dishes, appetisers and more. The feast will be available from 6pm to 11pm, at BD19,500net per person, inclusive of soft beverages, tea or coffee.

For an exquisite afternoon, delight in a range of delicate pastries and freshly-baked scones, served with tea and coffee, at the hotel's lobby. Available everyday, from 2pm to 5pm, it costs BD15net per person.

Don't miss out on the hotel's paddle court promotion, everyday from 7am to 10pm for BD5 per person per hour. Rackets are available to rent for BD2 per person per hour.

Make the most of your summer with a family pool day pass. It includes a day pass for two adults and two children under 16, for BD30 on weekdays and BD42 on weekends. Individual pool day passes cost BD10 on weekdays and BD15

GO WILD ABOUT BRUNCH!

on weekends. Passes are only available until August 31.

Relax this weekend with luxurious massages at affordable prices. Book any massage for BD40 (60 minutes), or choose between a full-body scrub and a full body massage, or a full body scrub and express facial, for BD70 for 90 minutes.

For more information or bookings, call 17517715 or 3885409.



TASTY: Lunch at Wild

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment



TASTE OF INDIA:
Independence day
feast at Nirvana

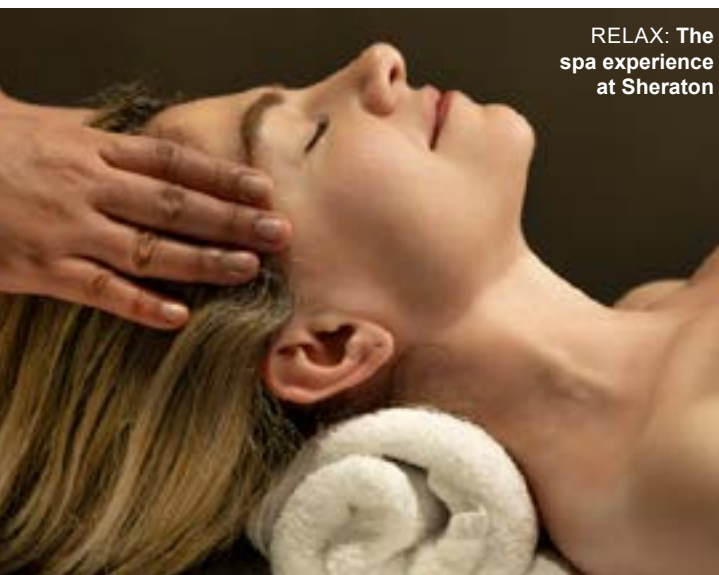
Bahrain's Bastien Gonzalez Studio. Blending a holistic and medical approach, the treatment is designed to support both the health and appearance of your hands and feet. By booking a pedicure, guests will also

receive a complimentary manicure, at BD55 per person, until September 15.

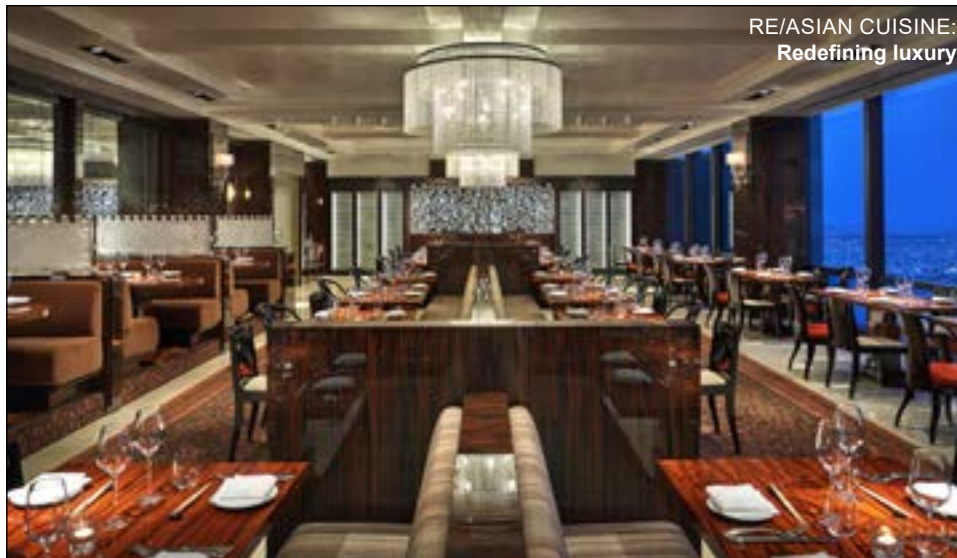
For more information, call 1758 6414 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com to reserve.



TEMPTATIONS:
Pastries and
scones



RELAX: The
spa experience
at Sheraton



RE/ASIAN CUISINE:
Redefining luxury

BAO DOWN TO THE FLAVOURS SO BOLD

THIS summer, Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay has lined up an array of fantastic dining experiences.

Bay View Lounge has introduced the Bao Bonanza – a limited-time menu where bold global flavours meet soft, steamed buns. Highlights include slow-cooked beef brisket, spicy Asian-style lobster, mango chicken and more, available this month from 11.30am to midnight.

Guests can also soar to the 50th floor and take their seat at re/ASIAN CUISINE's Sushi Bar, where handcrafted nigiri, sashimi and signature rolls are prepared before their eyes. Savour delicious dishes such as crispy shrimp potstickers, miso-honey salmon and wok-fried whole black sea bass.

For the perfect finishing touch, enjoy a pre- or post-dinner drink at Blue Moon Lounge.

Make the most of your summer with a relaxing retreat at a private island sanctuary.

Soak up the sun on the white-sand beach, make a splash with the little ones in the water park, and enjoy all-day entertainment at the vibrant beach club.

Bahrain residents enjoy a 20 per cent off on room rate and exclusive dining savings.

Relax with a loved one and slip into serenity with the Night Spa experience, exclusively for two. The evening starts at 11pm with a deeply relaxing 60-minute



SOFT: Bao
Bonanza



RICH: Icecreams for the season

aromatherapy massage beside the softly lit waters of the indoor pool.

After your treatment, savour an hour of complete privacy from midnight until 1am. A chilled bottle of your preferred beverage awaits, paired with handcrafted chocolates, macarons and seasonal berries. It costs BD280 from Sunday to Wednesday, and BD295

from Thursday to Saturday, both for 120 minutes.

Gather your family and friends and relax with a Moon Yoga Session on August 23, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. It costs BD6 per person for hotel guests and members and BD12 for outside guests.

For more information, contact 17115000 or 17115044.



HEAD down to CINECO Seef to watch the latest English-language films being shown this weekend.

UNDER FIRE (15+)

Two undercover agents for the FBI and DEA suddenly reveal their true identities during a cartel deal, each unaware the other was working the same case. Their surprise is short-lived when a hail of sniper bullets leaves them pinned down and outgunned.

Actors: Dylan Sprouse, Mason Gooding, Emilio Rivera

Timings: 1.45pm, 5.30pm, 9.15pm

THE UNHOLY TRINITY (15+)

Buried secrets of an 1870s Montana town spark violence when a young man returns to reclaim his legacy. Caught between a sheriff determined to maintain order and a mysterious stranger bent on destruction, he must navigate a volatile landscape of revenge, justice and survival.

Actors: Pierce Brosnan, Samuel Jackson, Brandon Lessard

Timings: 11.15am, 3.30pm, 7.45pm, midnight

THE OCCUPANT (PG-15)

Abby, a guilt-ridden engineering geologist, survives a mysterious helicopter crash while returning from a remote assignment. As she battles the elements and searches for a way out, she begins to suspect that she is not alone and that something far more unsettling awaits her.

Actors: Ella Balinska, Stuart Graham, Sheena Kelly

Timings: 1.15pm, 5.30pm, 9.45pm

GUNS UP (15+)

Guns Up follows Ray Hayes (Kevin James), an ex-cop and devoted husband and father who leads a dangerous double life as a mob henchman.

Actors: Kevin James, Christina Ricci, Luis Guzmán

Timings: 11.30am, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

Pulse of Pop

AROUND THE WORLD IN MUSIC, TV, BOOKS AND MORE - BY RIMA ALHADDAD

MUSICAL INTROSPECTION

A MERICAN artist Chancelor Johnathan Bennett aka Chance the Rapper drops his long-awaited album *Star Line* tomorrow.

The project tackles personal change and life lessons and marks the artist's return since his debut release *The Big Day* (2019), themed on his wedding that year.

It drew harsh criticism from fans on social media, who considered it a downgrade from its preceding mixtapes.

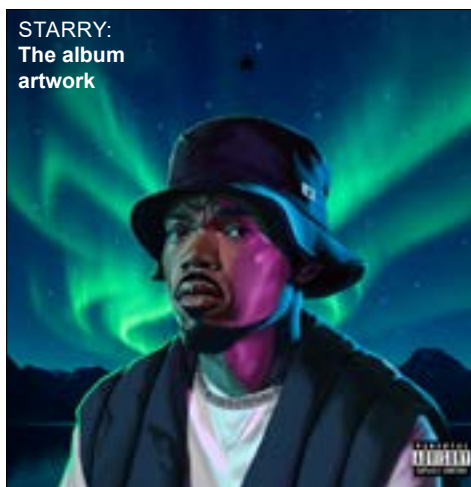
The artist has since divorced his wife and Internet personality Kirsten Corley.

In an interview, Chance said the new album is inspired by his trips to Jamaica and Ghana and attending various art fairs around the world.

"Going to Ghana, reconnecting with a lot of my family, going through relationships changing, getting divorced – there are a lot of things that happened between my last project and this day," he said.

"I think the sounds, production-wise, if they're not super experimental, they're based on some of the Black music that was influential to me throughout my childhood or through my travels."

STARRY:
The album
artwork



According to the artist, he was also inspired by Black Star Line, a shipping and passenger company that was started in 1919 by Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey for people of African descent.

"I was really inspired by his work and some of the ideas and opinions that he had, on us all being one people. So when I came to Ghana for the first time in January, I was already inspired by Marcus Garvey and



SAILOR: Chance on
a promotional poster

Garveyism. I learned a little bit of family history regarding Garveyism and how it connected to their faith," Chance added.

'Garveyism' refers to the body of thought and organisational activities associated with

the namesake activist.

The album also marks a reunion between Chance and illustrator Brandon Breau, who has created artworks for all of his other projects (except *The Big Day*).

ROMANTIC comedy film *Materialists* is out now in theatres.

Starring Dakota Johnson, Chris Evans and Pedro Pascal, the film follows failed-actress-turned-successful-matchmaker Lucy Mason, who finds herself in a love triangle between her ex-boyfriend, John, an aspiring actor played by Chris Evans, and a charming millionaire, Harry, portrayed by Pedro Pascal.

Directed by South Korean-Canadian born filmmaker Celine Song, *Materialists* is her second film to be released following *Past Lives* (2023), which earned an Oscar nomination in 2024 for best picture and best original screenplay.

Celine, who is also the screenwriter, said she wanted to explore relationships across the class divide and what she describes as the 'transactional nature of dating in New York' based on her observations, as she was once a matchmaker for six months.

"I think that I learned more about people in those six months than I did in any other part of my life," Celine said.

"I wanted to talk about the way that we're being asked to objectify and



CHARMING: The protagonists
featured in a promotional
photo for the film

TRADING LOVE

commodify each other and ourselves, even when it comes to matters of the heart, matters of love, and I think that I was really shocked while I was working as a matchmaker

by how we were talking about what we were looking for in dating.

"Dating is, of course, a game we play in search of love and love itself is an ancient mystery, a great

miracle.

"It's something entirely worth the trouble and the risk and none of these numbers are going to be able to help us get there," she added.

SPELLING OUT GRIEF

A DULT fiction author Joanne Yi's debut novel *All the Tomorrows After* hits the shelves on August 19.

The story follows Korean-American teen Winter Moon, a girl in a troubled household. She is saving money in hopes of escaping with her terminally ill grandmother and living a better life.

However, Winter's spiteful mother steals her money and blows through it all in one day, forcing the young girl to return to her estranged father who reappears after being absent for more than a decade. The two agree that Winter would spend time with him in exchange for payment.

In an interview, the author said she took inspiration from her own grief journey and heritage, explaining that she lost her father to terminal illness, and that anticipatory grief did not prepare her as she knew and rejected his fate.

"I've spent most of my adulthood trying to find the right words. What I've learned is that there are none, really, to articulate

a loved one's slow and inevitable deterioration," Joanne explained.

"*All the Tomorrows After* is shaped by our journey, which began in the absence of hope and continues in the absence of a farewell. It is inspired by my father, his battle to maintain his identity, and our family's experiences as caregivers. It is a reflection of myself as a young adult navigating grief, guilt, and isolation," she added.



Mystical charm of Salalah



HOSPITABLE: Locals share a moment with the wanderlust



RICH HARVEST: Salalah's agricultural charm is a refreshing contrast to the desert landscapes – Krishna, left, with Noushad at a farm



TRAVEL REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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A Bahrain-based adventurer and overlander has added another feather to his wanderlust hat this summer by completing a 'soul-stirring' expedition to Oman.

V Krishna Das, an Indian expatriate and business development manager, clocked in 4,500km in five days, exploring the beauty of Salalah.

Overlanding or four-wheel-drive touring is a way of 'self-reliant overland travel to remote destinations' where the journey alone is the principal goal.

"Salalah during the Khareef season is breathtaking with its misty mountains, vibrant greenery and rhythmic pitter-patter of rain," the 38-year-old told *GulfWeekly*.

"It felt like stepping into another world. Oman stands apart from other Gulf countries with its raw, untouched beauty. While cities like Dubai and Doha dazzle with modernity, Salalah offers a serene, almost mystical charm," he added.

"Traversing the shifting terrains of Saudi Arabia and the UAE before entering Oman felt like peeling back the layers of the Gulf's diverse geography, but it was Salalah that truly stole the show."

Some of the places he covered during this trip were Ittin mountain, a scenic area with winding roads, foggy vistas, and cosy cafés nestled in the hills; Sheeheet sinkhole, a hidden gem and



MAPPED: The route Krishna took on his expedition

geological wonder in Dhofar region, boasting dramatic rock formations, and Marneef Cave and Blowholes where seawater shoots up when the tide is high.

"The landscape is so diverse in Oman and over 2,000km of driving revealed stunning contrasts – from golden desert dunes to fog-draped cliffs," he recalled.

"Driving through Rub'al Khali desert was an unforgettable experience. The vastness of this sandy expanse, with its endless horizon and shimmering dunes, was both humbling and awe-inspiring.

"On my visit to Ittin, I stayed in my car, surrounded by deep mist. There was zero visibility and nonstop rain,

which was surreal – like being wrapped in nature's quiet embrace," he added, talking about the highlights of the trip.

Despite the excitement, Krishna found navigating the mountains through heavy fog and rain quite challenging.

"I relied heavily on offline maps and pre-planned fuel stops, especially in remote stretches. Staying flexible with my itinerary helped me adapt to weather delays and changing road conditions," he explained.

The adrenaline junkie, who has been living in Bahrain for 17 years with wife Soja and children, Veena, eight, and Advait, three, started overlanding in 2014. He and his friend Pramod Ramachandran covered eight countries in the region over six days in a Mitsubishi Pajero. Since then, he has switched to travelling alone as he feels it helps him connect with his surroundings better.

So far, he has visited several countries, including Yemen, Türkiye, Malaysia and Thailand, which are recorded on his *YouTube* channel @Das_VK_Vlogs.

Krishna hopes to revisit Oman and experience the 'warmth and hospitality' of the Omani people once again.

"The people were so nice especially in the smaller villages, which added a deeply personal touch to the adventure. Their kindness and quiet pride in their heritage were truly moving," he said.

"I would like to thank Noushad Rawther, who guided me to all these incredible spots. His support made this journey more memorable," he added.

BRAIN-BUSTERS

QUIZMASTER and Radio Bahrain host Shannon Crockett, who has been entertaining people across the island with his brain-teasing quiz night sessions, has offered to put *GulfWeekly* readers' general knowledge to the test. Join in the fun every Thursday with Shannon's seven brain-busters.

- 1) Ganesha, one of the most well-known gods in Hinduism, has the head of which animal?
- 2) As Bollywood is to India; as Nollywood is to Nigeria, what is the name of the Pakistan film industry?
- 3) What is the nickname for the Lucknow team in the Indian Premier League cricket competition?
- 4) What is the highest peak in Pakistan?
- 5) In an Indian restaurant, if you were served 'aloo', which vegetable would you be eating?



- 6) Pakistan just won its very first gold medal at the Paris Olympics, in which event?
- 7) Which year marked the end of British rule on the Indian subcontinent?

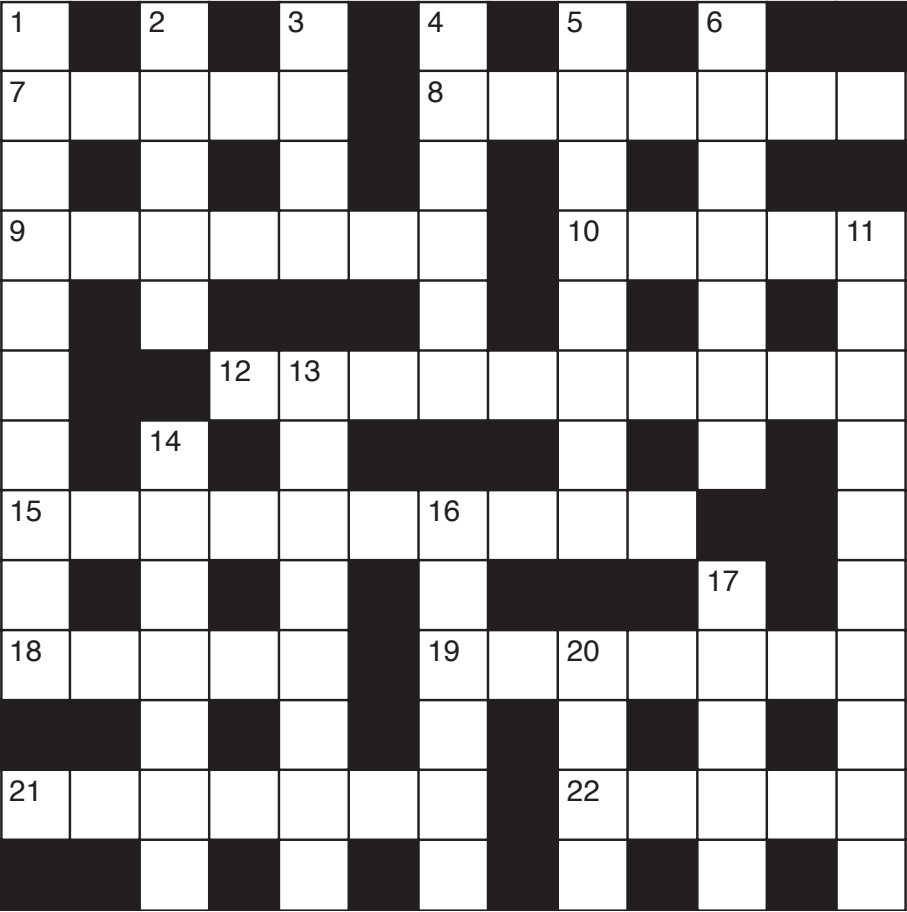
ANSWERS
1. Elephant
2. Lollywood
3. Lucknow Super Giants
4. K2
5. Potato
6. Javelin
7. 1947

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

- ACROSS
- DOWN
7. Foster (5)
1. Presiding (2,3,5)
8. Issue (7)
2. Buy off (5)
9. Frequenter (7)
3. Departed (4)
10. Helvetian (5)
4. Vacation (6)
12. Past times (4,4,2)
5. Countersign (8)
15. Prepared (2,3,5)
6. Sailor (7)
18. Circular (5)
11. Keep mum (3,7)
19. Supply (7)
13. Story (8)
21. Performance (7)
14. Unwavering (7)
22. Contempt (5)
16. Embrace (6)
17. Trinket (5)
20. Hazard (4)

who, what, where, when

- WHO ... wrote *The Defence of Poetry* in 1821?
- WHAT ... letter comes after X C V on a QWERTY keyboard?
- WHERE ... was the first free settlement in Australia?
- WHEN ... did Champlain found Quebec?
- WHO ... was the 13th president of the US?
- WHAT ... is Zuppa Inglese?
- WHERE ... were the 1972 Olympics held?
- WHEN ... was the Bank of England founded?

just so

yggip

MASTER
4

Beatrice

NOISACC
NOISACC

darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 1 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| 8 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| 7 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 6 |
| 6 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 9 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 9 |
| 2 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| 3 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 8 |
| 9 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |

darn tough sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| 3 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 4 |
| 7 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 |
| 4 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 9 |
| 9 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| 8 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 |
| 1 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 |

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | | 3 | 8 | | | 6 | |
| 6 | 8 | | | | 2 | | | 1 |
| | | 2 | | 7 | | | 5 | |
| | 5 | 3 | | | 1 | 7 | | |
| 1 | | 4 | | 2 | 8 | | | 3 |
| | | 7 | 4 | | | 2 | 1 | |
| | | 8 | | 6 | | 9 | | 7 |
| 3 | 2 | | 5 | | | | 4 | 8 |
| | 4 | | | 3 | | | | 5 |

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 7 | | | | | 3 |
| | 5 | | 4 | | | 7 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | 1 | | | 5 | | | 2 | |
| 5 | | | | 6 | 3 | 2 | | 8 |
| | 8 | | | | | | 9 | |
| | | 7 | 5 | 2 | | | | |
| | | | 6 | | | 1 | 5 | |
| 1 | 6 | 2 | | | 5 | | 3 | |
| 9 | | | | 1 | | | | 4 |

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

- Across: 1 Plausible; 8 Run; 9 Appreciable; 11 Science; 12 Ridge; 13 Praise; 15 Docile; 17 Erect; 18 Extinct; 20 Ill-mannered; 22 Cos; 23 Refreshed.
- Down: 2 Lap; 3 Stern; 4 Boiled; 5 Embargo; 6 Bread-winner; 7 Increment; 10 Philatelist; 11 Supremacy; 14 Settler; 16 Behalf; 19 Tense; 21 Ewe.
- Who, What, Where, When: Laomedan; My fault; Venice; William Hogarth; Mu; Alor Setar; 1946.
- Just So: Every man jack, Eyes on the road, From first to last, Odds and ends

Darn Tough Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | | | | 9 | | | | 4 |
| | | 9 | | | | 1 | | |
| | 4 | | | | | | 2 | |
| | 3 | | 1 | | 9 | | 8 | |
| | 9 | | 6 | 8 | 2 | | 4 | |
| | 2 | | 5 | | 3 | | 6 | |
| | 7 | | | | | | 3 | |
| | | 8 | | | | 7 | | |
| 3 | | | | 5 | | | | 6 |

Your work pad here ...